

# PTAH THE EL DAQUD

ALICE COLTRANE





IMPD-201

- 1 > Ptah, The El Daoud 13:58
- 2 > Turiya And Ramakrishna 8:19
- 3 > Blue Nile 6:58
- 4 > Mantra 16:33

All compositions by Alice Coltrane

Personnel:

Alice Coltrane, piano, harp

Pharoah Sanders, tenor saxophone, alto flute, bells (right channel)

Joe Henderson, tenor saxophone, alto flute (left channel)

Ron Carter, bass

Ben Riley, drums

Original Sessions Produced by Ed Michel

Reissue produced by Michael Cuscuna

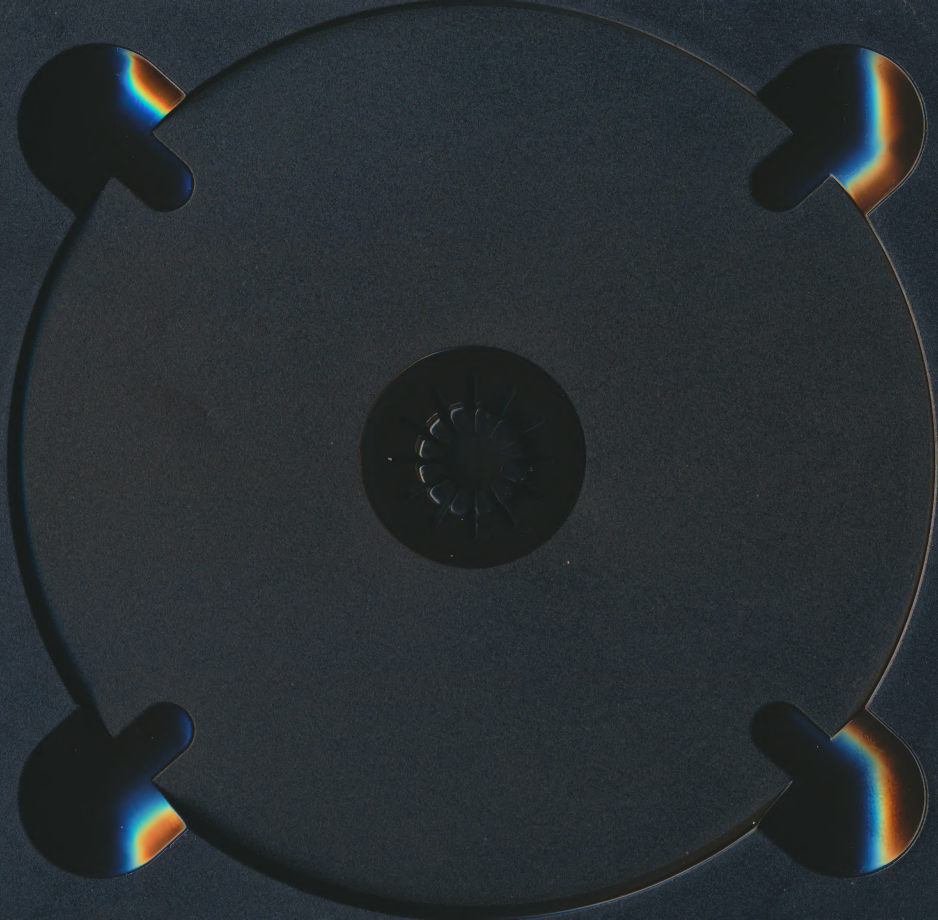
Recorded at the Coltrane home studio, Dix Hills,  
New York on January 26, 1970

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IMPULSE! IMPD-201

**PTAH,  
THE  
EL DAUD  
ALICE  
COLTRANE**



**THE  
NEW WAVE  
OF JAZZ  
IS ON  
IMPULSE!**



PTAH, THE EL DAOUD |  
**ALICE COLTRANE**



# Ptah, The El Daoud

## ALICE COLTRANE

"I introduced Alice to John Coltrane. Our group was playing opposite Trane's at Birdland. From the very first evening she listened intently to his music, and gradually I sensed a new influence finding its way into her own style. I guess that was the turning point in her life."

The speaker was Terry Gibbs, whose quartet in 1962-3 was memorable for the presence of a tall, gracious and dignified girl named Alice McLeod. Before going on the road with Gibbs, she had spent her few professional years at home in Detroit, working with a trio.

"Of course, she had been strongly influenced by Bud Powell," Gibbs continued, "but she was always seeking, always trying for something else. During her year with me, the first indication that she was going into a more abstract direction was an album of Jewish songs we made. They were all minor melodies that seemed to fit what she was trying to do. She ran away with the whole session.

"One of the least known things about Alice is that she could have been one of the true giants on vibes. She started playing with me — we used to do duets, you know — and within six months she was into her own style. I hope some day she'll take up vibes again."





As other commentators have observed, Alice McLeod Coltrane has moved into an area of music that cannot and should not be classified simply as jazz, one in which such jazz appurtenances as chord patterns and a steady beat are tools, to be used or discarded according to the requirements of the moment, rather than crutches to be depended on constantly.

4 Aside from one track on which Pharoah Sanders played bass clarinet ("Ohnedaruth" in the Monastic Trio album, AS-9156), this is Alice Coltrane's first album with horns. The spiritualism and mysticism, the legacy of John Coltrane's guidance that informed her earlier works seem to have been communicated here to Sanders and to Joe Henderson. The oneness among the musicians is never more than in **Blue Nile**. With the saxophonists doubling on alto flutes and Mrs. Coltrane playing harp, a sense of serenity is achieved.

In dynamic contrast, the force and grandeur of which the leader and her hornmen are capable is vibrantly displayed in **Ptah**, **The El Daoud**. Starting with Ron Carter's incomparably steady bass walk, adding the first piano and drums, the mood is affirmed as the horns play the deliberate, rhythmically emphatic E flat minor motif.

The two tenor solos offer not just a study in contrasts but an exercise in sedulously built intensity. Henderson essentially is a link between three influences: Bird, Trane, and the developments that have formed since and because of Trane. Sanders, though more or less a contemporary of Henderson (he is 29, Joe is 33), seems to spring more directly out of Trane's essence. As Mrs. Coltrane puts it, "Joe Henderson is more on the intellectual side, while Pharoah is more abstract, more transcendental."

(Note: Henderson is on the left channel, Sanders is on the right on all tracks.)

5 Of the title, Alice says: "Ptah is the name of an Egyptian god — in fact, one of the highest aspects of God. 'The El Daoud' means 'the Beloved.' My meaning here was to express and bring out a feeling of purification. Sometimes on earth we don't have to wait for death to go through a sort of purging, a purification. That march you hear is a march on to purgatory, rather than a series of changes a person might go through."

The piano passage on **Ptah** is a definitive statement of where Mrs. Coltrane is in 1970. Modality and technical facility are means rather than ends; her articulation makes extraordinarily skillful use of the instrument as the statements are outlined in long, gracefully curvilinear motions.



PHAROAH SANDERS

JOE HENDERSON



RON CARTER



BEN RILEY

ALICE COLTRANE





**Turiya** was defined by Alice as “a state of consciousness — the high state of Nirvana, the goal of human life.” **Ramakrishna** was an Indian mystic and religious leader of the late 19th century. The name also denotes a movement founded by his disciples, embodied in a monastic order devoted to spiritual cultivation and philanthropic work.

**Turiya & Ramakrishna**, played without the horns, is a work of great delicacy and one that almost bursts with soul. Basically the melodic line is built around three notes. (“It’s more a feeling than a melody,” says Alice.) But the embellishments with which the three notes are surrounded lend the work its affecting, blues-rooted quality. Notice, too, the perfect precision and tasteful choice of notes on the part of Ron Carter, both in his role as a rhythm section component and later during his mood-sustaining solo.

“You’ll notice near the end,” says Alice, “where I modulate from D Flat up to D and back to the D Flat before going out, there’s a suggestion of “Parker’s Mood”, the part to which the words went ‘Come with me....’ It’s like God asking us if we want to go home — that kind of feeling.”



**Mantra**, meaning a prayer or chant, is an extended base for further explorations by the tenors. “It’s rewarding to work with horn players,” Alice reflects. “Lately I’ve been working out with Ornette, Archie Shepp, so many musicians who have stimulated my thinking.”

“In fact, making this album was an important experience, because it added a new dimension for me. In addition to playing my solos I had a chance to play behind the horns.”

As the bold, firmly integrated sound of the unit washes over the listener, the value of her experience stands out in bold relief. Hearing her function in this capacity, feeding and interweaving with the horns and rhythm section, we encounter another aspect of Alice Coltrane. Gradually the portrait is rounded out — a handsome likeness of a woman who has lived, loved, suffered, who has brought to her art a very special sense of esthetic universality.

— Leonard Feather,  
author of **The Encyclopedia of Jazz in The Sixties**.  
[Original liner notes from **Ptah, The El Daoud**, AS-9196]



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 (right channel)  
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**Produced by Ed Michel**

Reissue produced by Michael Cuscuna

Recorded at the Coltrane home studio, Dix Hills,  
 New York on January 26, 1970

Recording engineer: W.L. Barneke

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Joe Henderson appears through the courtesy of Milestone Records

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ALICE COLTRANE



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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
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All compositions by Alice Coltrane (Jowcol Music [BMI])

**TO THE LISTENER:**

In our continuing attempt to remain true to the original recordings (in both sound quality and design), we at Impulse Records have not made any changes in content, spelling or grammar to the original text.

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**ALICE COLTRANE**

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**20** BIT  
SUPER  
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**impulse!**

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COMPACT  
**disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO

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